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AUTHOR Haynes, Felicity
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ABSTRACT

Authority is legitimized by the willingness of those subject to it to accept it. Authoritarianism develops when those subject to authority must be coerced into accepting it. This paper argues that to maintain legitimate authority and avoid becoming authoritarian, educators, educational institutions, and educational systems must be willing to change to satisfy the evolving needs of the people they educate. The paper looks at the ways in which knowledge can be defined and categorized and at social developments that change the values of different categories of knowledge. Also considered is the extent to which the criteria and methods used in assessing knowledge acquisition can influence the nature and consequent value of the knowledge taught. The paper questions the relevance of reforms made in the name of quality. Some implications of and challenges to Piaget's theory of cognitive development are also reviewed as they affect common assumptions about the ways knowledge can be categorized, transferred, and valued. The paper concludes by noting the dilemma faced by educators wishing to respond to the unique demands of groups within the society while encouraging socially beneficial communication among these groups. Illustrations of educational authority and authoritarianism are provided from Australian experience. (PGD)

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THE LIMITS OF AUTHORITY

Felicity Haynes

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It is traditionally assumed that authority is distinguishable from power in one single respect, that it is willingly and without coercion accepted by those under it. Acknowledgment of the legitimacy of such authority is an essential feature of the concept. Its chief source of legitimation is upwards, from below, for when the legitimation is a purely top-down process it becomes authoritarianism and virtually indistinguishable from power, of which authority is a legitimate and distinct subset. Peters had argued this in Ethics and Education (p.239). He later makes an analogous distinction between discipline and punishment (p.267). "'Discipline', etymologically speaking, is rooted in a learning situation; it conveys the notion of submission to rules or some sort of order... while punishment involves the intentional infliction of pain or of something unpleasant on someone who has committed such a breach of rules." Etymologically speaking, discipline should suggest that the rules of a knowledge system are willingly followed, as with a disciple, whereas punishment involves coercive power, an attempt to force compliance with rules even if unwilling compliance. However the gap between discipline and punishment has narrowed in current practice.

In this paper I want to argue that while the distinction between authority and power is a useful one in philosophical discourse, it is a little harder to maintain in educational practice, particularly where curriculum is concerned. The two-dimensional conceptual dichotomy presumed by Peters may perhaps be more fruitfully examined by placing it in a triangulation which involves continual modification against the undescribed world, a triangulation which involves practical as well as propositional constraints.

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Let us first look at the authority of knowledge which allows a teacher to be called "an authority". Remember the Dickensian classroom, in which Bitzer, the prize pupil, demonstrates his rehearsed knowledge of a horse to three gentlemen - Mr Gradgrind,

Mr McChoakumchild and an anonymous government officer, "a professional pugilist; always in training, always with a system to force down the general throat like a bolus". Sissy Jupes, daughter of a circus performer, has been brought up amongst horses and knows far more about feeding and managing them than Bitzer ever will, but has not the necessary propositional knowledge to make sense of or repeat Bitzer's definition. She fails the criteria for success in the classroom and leaves classified as a failure.

This may be fiction, and pretty heavyhanded at that, but it is strongly reminiscent of American negroes who claimed in this century that they were being unfairly discriminated against in standardized intelligence tests such as the Standfcrd-Binet or ASAT which failed them but did not take into account their culture and street-wisdom. While Dickens clearly regarded the educational system as authoritarian (1), it could also have been described as authoritative in that it did embody the perceived hegemony of the time, and saw power as simply a means of preserving such authority rather than enforcing it.

In the twentieth-century an understanding of the networks of rules underlying the so-called disciplines is at least as important as the memorizing of facts. However, the situation is still one where those who can gain practical wisdom outside the educational system help to invalidate the authority of that institution. There is too large a gap between formal knowledge requirements and practical wisdom. The forms of knowledge to which one still aspired even ten years ago were those apparently logically distinct and irreducible forms which covered the domain of true propositions and had their own truth concepts, a distinct logical form, and their own key concepts. While "fields of knowledge", less systematic and unique than forms, were possible within a curriculum, Hirst (1974 chs.4, 6) originally excluded from his definition of knowledge (2) all tacit knowing such as experience, attitudes, symbols, skills, feelings, those meanings which included knowledge of people and places and which enabled an individual to function

practically in a society, all of which I shall subsume under the heading realms of meaning. His definition of a desirable liberal education covered simply the forms of knowledge, by definition more deliberate and controlled and certainly more easily assessable than tacit understanding. 'Knowledge' by the twentieth century had come to mean Hirst's propositional knowledge within his forms of knowledge, leaving 'realms of meaning' to cover those tacit forms of understanding which are little more than the inchoate shared conventions of the society and not specifically the province of educational institutions. Here, as in Dickensian times, epistemological power is authorized because it is seen to be promoting what is generally believed to be both right and true.

Such forms of knowledge pretended to put the curriculum beyond political debate and educational authority was maintained by easily measurable and definable standards. "Literate experts were paid (...) to devise logical plans, order concepts into related areas, establish taxonomic hierarchies, denature ritual by theologising it, freeze thought into philosophy, and impose the grid of law on custom" (Turner, 1974, p.117). The "curriculum" contains what is seen to be in keeping with the values of the time, and where the uneducated sees no injustice in the system of the time the authority of those in power is legitimised, simply because it is accepted, even if tacitly, by them.

Authoritarianism can be shown to be not so much a matter of the amount of power involved, but a value-laden term which describes a certain discontent with something which has become nonnegotiable, over-rigid, an end in itself rather than a means to a social end. The examinations which were originally intended to measure success in acquiring worthwhile skills became in the 'sixties' in Australia at least the goal of the secondary system - compulsory written external examinations at Year 10 and Year 12 level. The objectives of educational institutions were viewed by most simply in linear terms as an attempt to move beyond realms of meaning towards the formal disciplines of propositional knowledge, and even better to batteries of multiple choice questions in which literary skills were no longer required, simply the ability to pick

out the most acceptable answers from sets of alternatives. The more sophisticated the disciplinary structures, the wider the gap between institutional testing of those structures and social awareness.

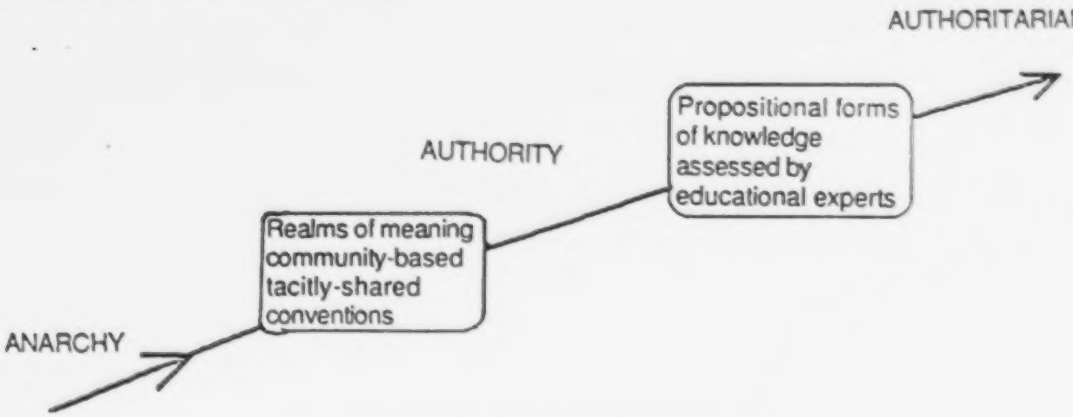

Figure 1. Evolution of authority.

On Peters' distinction between authority and power, authority tends to become authoritarianism (see Figure 1.) in a frantic attempt to persuade the unconvinced that forms of knowledge are good for them. In oscillatory reaction one extreme reacts at the expense of the other. Let me offer an example of this. Here in Australia we still have large centralized bureaucracies which decide what shall be the texts, the syllabuses, the examination requirements, even the cut-off grades for entry into all tertiary institutions. The "experts" wield power, and even though subject areas have their own joint syllabus committees which provide some input from schools, teacher associations and tertiary institutions, the final decision regarding curriculum content, examination format, assessment guidelines, comes not from seconded teachers within the curriculum and research branches but from Government-employed superintendents who control not only the syllabuses but the employment and transfer of teachers.

Such a situation is historically acceptable as long as the testing system organised by them, even if it does not seem directly relevant to life-skills, offers some guarantee of a successful career and accelerated financial expectations for those who passed. However in the current social climate, passing centralised tests does not guarantee

entry into tertiary education and makes less relative difference to ultimate financial reward (3).

To rectify this alienation of parents from the state schools, there has been a radical attempt to revise the secondary school syllabus. University entrance exams in the forms of knowledge are viewed as symptomatic of authoritarianism because they are seen as pertinent only to those 20% who go on to study for professions in tertiary education. Now "life-skills" such as media studies, social studies, agricultural practice, manual arts are seen as more socially relevant, therefore deserving more attention in the syllabus.

This is clearly a political stance in a democratic society. Political activists and/or romantic idealists have constructed a confrontatory situation between certain social interests and the existing State educational authority which was dominated by the universities, and increasingly considered authoritarian. The State has been described in terms of its coercive and punitive power to fail those who drop out, and in terms of an intricate and impersonal bureaucratic machinery which perpetuates an apparently archaic system. The apparent solution has been to deny the value of the structures of authority so that people can overcome the alienation that prevents them from realizing their full potentialities and from achieving fruitful personal relations with others. This would remove the coercion of failing and enhance the student's prospects for achieving democratic equality with those who earlier had held authority.

The ideal is the romantic one espoused by the deschoolers in the early sixties. The assumption is that by liberating students from the compulsion of forms of knowledge the school could and should transmit realms of meaning more relevant to the student than the largely middleclass values held and transmitted by the experts. The authority of the teacher is dismissed - as Freire (1970, p.67) says "No one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught... the students are critical co-investigators in dialogue with

the teacher". This is a romantic and unrealistic vision of schools which denies schools the authority they require in order to fulfil any educational function, especially when it accords equal "educational power" to the mass media or commerically produced home-computer programmes. Just as educational authority implies power, education implies standards and consists in initiating others into activities, modes of contact and thought that have standards written into them. Perhaps the traditional forms of assessment had moved too far from **public** standards, but it was a mistake to assume that failure could be removed from the institution without at the same time removing its authority. To remove failure may appear to be democratic, but it has disastrous educational consequences for educational authority in that it leaves the schools with no specific role to play and no teachers equipped specifically to be expert in the field.

Ironically, in Australia, the "democratic" revisions do not return authority to the community. Neither parents, principals nor teachers are prepared to accept responsibility for implementing and evaluating the new proposals, claiming lack of expertise. In Victoria it was deemed necessary to pass legislation to ensure that parents served on school boards and discussed curriculum and educational standards. But in most cases the task of implementing programs and finding ways of evaluating them was left in the hands of the central bureaucracies whose power the move had been designed to override. There is a language of liberation, but the power structure remains the same.

Perhaps a recognition of the need for standards in schools, even if some students must fail, will overcome the problem. The current move in America towards "quality" as defined by the original forms of knowledge or "disciplinary-based education" is symptomatic of a backlash regression to the authoritarian end of the continuum. However, "quality", "standards", "disciplines" are a necessary rather than a sufficient condition for educational authority, as my initial example from Dickens showed. The American trends will simply be regressive unless some steps are made to overcome

the social alienation caused by the imposition of forms of knowledge perceived as irrelevant to the practices of the society (4).

I believe part of the impasse lies in accepting as a foundation for educational decisions the simplistic linear model in figure 1 which aligns forms of knowledge with the authoritarians and realms of meaning with the community. This model underlines (erroneously in my opinion) current acceptance and application of Piagetian stage-developmental cognitive theory as leading to some innate or a priori truth. It relies on two mistaken assumptions. The first is that the forms of knowledge are value-free and separate from social values, that being abstract and formal they are universal and thus in a neo-Kantian sense necessarily true. Hirst himself in his earlier writing had assumed this - basing his account of forms of knowledge on fairly positivist assumptions that the more systematic a discipline was the more likely it was to be true, even if the criteria for truth varied from discipline to discipline. R.S. Peters, while he espoused a more moderate line, held to an implicit belief in the systematicity of rationality to resolve practical problems by abstracting them to broader principles. Later, Hirst was to admit that the objectives of education should not be confined to propositional knowledge, which would simply transmit as true conservative system but he was to admit (1974, p.92-3).

> the conceptual and logical analysis which indicates the divisions I have stressed is a matter of the logical relations and truth criteria to be found at present in our conceptual schemes ... that there exist any elements in thought that can be known to be immune to change, making transcendental demands on us, I do not accept. Being rational I see rather as a matter of developing conceptual schemes by means of public language in which words are related to our forms of life, so that we make objective judgements in relation to some aspect of that form of life.

The second erroneous assumption was that the realms of meaning could not be authoritarian. The new sociologists who openly criticized manipulative authority of knowledge systems made explicit the conservative values that made teaching male line genealogies of Tudor and Stuart kings accepted practice even in Australian schools during the last thirty years. The forms of knowledge were built up from shared values and could not claim to be based on objective judgements. Yet we do not avoid transmitting shared values by ceasing to teach conservative forms of knowledge as if they were universal truths. Forms of knowledge may have encapsulated values unacceptable to a changing society but even when they are modified rather than totally discarded, the values are transmitted nonetheless. Bruner's MACOS course, while apparently more openended may indirectly teach such values as toughness and survival in a difficult environment as if they were as basic to human as to animal studies. The difference between that and the more formal systems of evaluation is that one is not failed for disagreeing with the values transmitted, but rather encouraged to discuss them. The values are presented for discussion rather than as immutable facts which represent the truth and the whole truth.

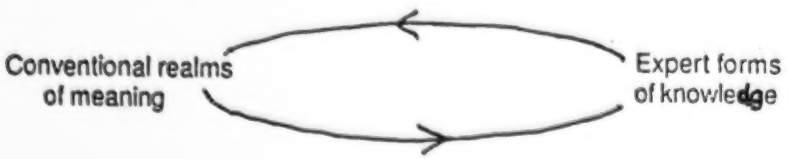

Figure 2. Authority as interactive rather than progressive.

It would seem a positive step to make the one-way progress towards propositional knowledge a two-way interaction between community values and legitimated disciplinary forms. But as long as compulsory schooling is deemed necessary to transmit what is considered worthwhile, the socio-political and curricular realms of power must remain intimately related even where the curriculum is loosened up to include realms of meaning. It may be that as we finally discard the old rule-books of parsing and

analysis, we have to accept the responsibility of finding new ways of defining and measuring literacy; that if we decide not to assess understanding of physics solely in terms of success in learning formulae or solving equations, that we have to find new means of evaluating understanding of complex ideas.

We just have to remain aware of the dangers of coercive power even in realms of meaning. Even if all that appeared on the old report forms were marks in the examinations in maths, botany or literature, socio-political values of docility, punctuality, neatness were implicitly evaluated as well, though the manner of evaluation may have been more qualitative than quantitative. The evaluation was often made in the behaviorist mode rather than by written tests or catechisms, but compliance was expected, and indeed such habits often formed part of the standard presentation of the propositional forms of knowledge. Hence T.F. Green's model of teaching with its parameters set at both indoctrination and conditioning. It may be that the new standards in education will evaluate such things as group co-operation and self-esteem on an equal status with competitive ranking in the disciplinary areas. It may simply be that new tests are standardized to evaluate such new subjects as computer studies, politics, aesthetics, and that these will gradually become as rigidified and "irrelevant" as some of the examination requirements seem today. I do not presume that there is a necessary progression towards formalization of assessment as Toulmin (1972, espec. p.359) seems to have done. The emphasis on "quality" need not presume regression to past methods. Current "debate" between the relative values of D.T. Campbell's "mainstream evaluation" and Stakean case-studies (5) provides some evidence for a healthy attempt to compromise between the extremes of anarchy and authoritarianism.

One of the difficulties is to realize how deeply values are embedded in our epistemological structures. The forms of life which shape both our practices and our articulated systems of knowledge are very rarely questioned at the deepest level (6). Likewise authority is usually inaccessible to reflection because it is embedded

in the very structures and "power practices" which shape consciousness and reflection. It is not enough to say that authority reverts to authoritarianism because it becomes explicit, or that anarchy prevails in social practices because the rules have not been formulated. The problem is to provide enough structure so that one has some idea of transmissible standards and rules, and enough flexibility to be able to modify to fit current social requirements without losing any sense of structure.

The above thesis is so abstractly presented that it seems both trite and truistic. A very brief case-study of recent changes in evaluation and authority in moral education may make my point more concretely.

In the sixties, Kohlberg (1958, 1976) proposed a universal principle of justice which, as the old linear model required, moved toward abstract and systematized principles to replace the currently accepted practices of moral education. One was tested, not so much on the content of one's answer to the hypothetical problems set, but on the scope and consistency of the logical framework used to answer it. He traced six stages of moral development, a three-level progression from an egocentric understanding of fairness based on individual need (stages one and two), to a conception of fairness anchored in the shared conventions of societal agreement (stages three and four) and finally to a principled understanding of fairness that rested on the free-standing logic of equality and reciprocity (stages five and six). The theory was built on a concept of justice which most Americans had accepted tacitly even before Rawls had made it explicit, just as education in general had proceeded using concepts of truth which most people had accepted without question. Moreover Kohlberg's model had the advantage of being divisible into fairly well-defined stages, so that one could draw up criteria to assess what moral stage one's students had reached.

Like the traditional curriculum still offered in most Australian schools where science

and maths dominate because of their implied objectivity and east of assessment, it had the twin advantages of being widely and unquestioningly accepted and of being relatively easy to assess, especially by those who had, even if unknowingly, adopted the principles on which it rested. It was in keeping with the romantic sixties revolt against failure, for while there was a level six tantamount to sainthood to aspire to, one was "moral" even at stage one, even if a different conception of morality was being applied.

It was realistic of Kohlberg to assert that morality could not be taught, even if it could be encouraged by dorcing confrontation with different values. He was more concerned to evaluate and encourage moral thinking than to teach moral truths. Ironically, because of the tacit faith in measurement as the means of achieving objectivity, just as in the IQ tests, the statistics o fhte average gradually became the basis for evaluation. Kohlberg found that most Americans did not progress beyond stages three and four. Because by definition average teachers cannot understand higher levels, they could and would not encourage their students to aspire higher, so that a vicious circle is set up whereby the norm defines and perpetuates expectations. Educators need to be aware that in their role of defining values and making knowledge amenable to evaluation they have the power to implement those values and disciplines for better or for worse. As Campbell (1979, p.85) said,

> The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor.

That seems a necessary concomitant of recognising the values embedded in forms of knowledge and seeking to evaluate students' mastery of them. It also raises problems for the authority of "teacher-as-expert". Is the better teacher the person who, as

in the past, transmits the values society has deemed to be worthwhile? If so, then the conservative teacher who operates at the norm is more likely to fit general expectations and be deemed fit to evaluate by his/her standards that students entrusted to him/her. People who have inordinately high IQs or have reached level six because they do not fit society's general expectations are not generally seen to be good teachers. Traditionally, as Kohlberg reminds us, their reward has not been promotion, but hemlock, crucifixion or assassination.

The old problem of who evaluates the evaluators is hereby revived. It becomes even more problematic when one of the worthwhile values to be transmitted is change, change of course which is positive. This is where the democratic ideal enters the picture, along with the dangers and advantages to authority of introducing pluralistic perspectives and empirical observation. After Kohlberg's work had received much attention from educators, Gilligan (1982, p.18) brought to people's attention the fact that Piaget and Kohlberg and based their theory of moral development on a biased sample which consisted mostly of males. She suggested that because there were far fewer women who seemed to move beyond stage three on Kohlberg's system, the so-called "universal principle" of justice applied mainly to men. For women, Gilligan claimed, the reconstruction of moral understanding was based not on the universality of individual rights, but rather "on a very strong sense of being responsible to the world". She discerned a vague sequential development, from an initial concern with survival to a focus on goodness and finally to a reflective understanding of care as the most adequate guide to the resolution of conflicts in human relationships. The evaluation of a scale of moral maturity which led through the adolescent questioning of conventional morality to the discovery of individual rights was shown to be inadequate to meet a feminine scale of values. The morality of responsibility stands apart from the path defined by Kohlberg.

What are the implications of this aberrant point of view for educational authority?

Should teahcers continue to promote, as they had possibly done unquestioningly in the past, one system of morality for men and one for women? That sort of pluralism simply reinforces old differences and promotes confrontation. The democratic principle requires a freedom of choice, so that in theory, males could choose the caring route and females the pathway to human rights if they wanted to. Would this have disastrous consequences for society? Is the right to choose to think like a male or female as empty as giving a male the right to bear children? A genuine choice would require that both systems are equally taught and evaluated, and neither is said to be better than another. But to speak of them as conflicting and distinct models, one of which will win seems to illustrate how a linear model of development could err because it requires different end-states or goals. An ecological model of growth,as espoused by Dewey, would not see the two as incompatible. The growth model would show it more functional to cull out the values common to both cultures and work on some compromise androgenous morality.

Even should we make the linear model more flexible so that the forms of knowledge are in constant contact with social reality, and vice versa, we have not yet shown how to initiate changes in institutional power. That authority requires consent is true by definition and does not enable us to decide how explicit and how open to external assessment we could or should make our educational practices. The tacit power element of authority can be even more effective than the coercion of legislated systems. When it is accepted uncritically through a balanced social system like that defined nostalgically in the opening paragraphs it not only measures the ability to get the subject to do what is required by the educator, but limits the ability of both power-holder and subject to see beyond the present actuality, or to modify preferred outcomes. That was certainly true of Kohlbergian morality, accepted by both sexes as appropriate until one representative rebelled against having to accept classification as if not a failure, at least no better than average on a masculine scale. As Nyberg and Farber remark (1986), "intelligent disobedience" is the peculiar desideratum of educational

authority. And the same "disobedience" is desirable both from students and educators. But how to hold it in check? The problem still remains to decide by what authority the disciplinary forms are modified and broad social objectives are defined and evaluated.

Logically, authority is defined in terms of a balance between two extremes of anarchy and authoritarianism. Its content is continually open to change. Perhaps one can lessen the possibility of drastic pendulum swings from one extreme to another by defining the situation in triadic rather than dyadic terms. I have been trying to show how educational authority relies on a continual openness to new possibilities. While it is responsible for setting standards through systematisation, such standards must continually be kept in touch with social practices. It has done this in many ways.

For instance, the democratic movement of the last century enlarged the extent of its pupils without changing content. The English Public School for instance opened its doors to all those who could pass the eleven-plus entrance exam. By maintaining its standards of excellence and its separation from the mainstream of English life, it deepened the schism between realms of meaning and forms of knowledge in the broader society just as Gradgrind's systems had done. One had freedom to choose to enter it only at the cost of having to meet its criteria of excellence.

Another reaction would be to espouse a pluralism, as Nash (1966) did, where testing, classifying, labelling were deliberately to be avoided. As I have argued, this denies the desirability of educators defining **any** standards by which students could be evaluated, and in principle removes a need for schools, thus removing their authority. In its weaker form pluralism eschews standardized testing in limited forms but acknowledges the need for some evaluation in more varied and tolerant forms. The need to accept broader values makes it difficult for teachers operating from conservative traditions to adapt, thus, temporarily at least, eroding their authority.

A middle way would appear to be to recognise that realms of meaning contained values which could become authoritarian but explicitly teach them alongside and consistently with forms of knowledge. Indeed this has happened in some private schools, where Catholics, Jews, Aborigines, the Amish are given freedom to establish mini-communities in which all their values are clearly defined. Control is granted over such things as dress, diet, sexual habits, religious observances as well as the forms of knowledge, all constantly monitored, and deliberately kept apart from other competing systems. This coherence, even if it might appear myopic, can maintain authority without being authoritarian as long as the system is freely chosen and coercion is not punitive.

The democratic principle would seem to have to allow such enclosed communities to exist, especially educationally. But a ghetto mentality discourages change and growth and increases the risk through misunderstanding of hostile confrontation with external groups. The argument against such closed systems is not on principle, especially when one is free to join or leave such closed communities at will. It is rather a practical problem of maintaining coherence within a broader society which often competes with its values without imposing authoritarian restrictions on communication. Such social groups have to compete with, say, the hedonistic or materialistic values promulgated by the media. One can decide how extensive the authority is to be, whether it demands total isolation, as with the Amish or some fundamentalist religious sects, or whether it is to be a supplementary school operating at the weekend to maintain traditional language and cultural skills, such as a small Japanese school here in Perth. The scope of evaluation will vary accordingly - Japanese students seem to have little difficulty in having to succeed within at least two systems simultaneously, and their loyalty to Japanese culture seems all the stronger for having been chosen rather than imposed.

I have been trying so far to show how educational authority relies on a continual oepnness to new possibilities. For while it is responsible for setting standards through systematisation, such standards must continually be kept in touch with social practices

and a working reality for the authority to be accepted with commitment. To use Toulmin's evolutionary model without the biological implications, a fitter ecological variation is encouraged by letting some varieties segregate, set up their own ecological niche and only then, if they so desire, interbreed.

Small communities such as Sparta were intensive and relatively successful while left alone, but fell before the greater powers of Greece and Rome. Social change, economic expansion, conquest, even in this age, lead to a clash of codes and to conflict between competing views of the world. Men are led to reflect about which story of the world is functional, which code more useful. In discussing and reflecting upon these matters their vocabulary is refined, and they come to accept higher order principles of a procedural sort for determining such principles. This however does not make the higher order principles true or immutable. No matter how far we agree on broad principles of justice, democracy, goodness or authority, our current social practices will give a different meaning to those principles. Awareness of the continual need to modify as well as purify the dialect of the tribe to keep in touch with those practices can only assist in maintaining genuine authority. That does not make social change a passive evolution in which individuals have no power to change the course of events. There are broader constraints operating on education over which educational authorities have little direct control. These include federal and state governments, private and business funding bodies, and alternative educational institutions as well as students, parents and other individuals.

I am offering a picture of a real world where we can make principles such as those of truth or authority extinct either by not acting or by overreacting. We have the responsibility to shape the world through our knowledge of it. The so-called aspiration to a universal principle of justice is shown by Gilligan to be an artefact of a system in much the same way that "mass", "force" and "energy" are artefacts of a system of physics. This does not make them in any way worthless or untrue. It is to say that

man constructs, for reasons that his society considers good, ways of seeing the world which become more and more systematised and reified until they become self-perpetuating truths. The linear way of viewing such a process makes it easy to assume progress for whichever set of values we are working from and to mistake means for ends. A more holistic approach makes it necessary to see that authority has inbuilt limits arising from complex boundaries of rationality, personal relevance, justice and individual appropriateness.

We have no pretensions to ultimate truths. Our guiding principles are not absolutes, and where they are definitive of values they are so because we have decided collectively that that shall be so. What I have been trying to do in this paper is to present an analysis of the existing constraints and show by examples how our current conceptions of democracy and evaluation and authority are interdependent. To define them without taking their interdependence into account is a mistake. To define them without taking into account the way the world currently is,is to remain trapped in a conceptual and/or rational web. All one can do is warn against actions that will destroy through imbalance an accepted authority. Shakespeare had already warned of the dangers of not seeing authority in its anthropomorphic context :

> But man, proud man, drest in a little brief authority,
> Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
> His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As make the angels weep.
>
> (Shakespeare, Measure for Measure, 11, ii).

I have presented some of the constraints that operate upon authority so that educators may avoid methods which lead to such fantastic tricks as make the angels weep.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Never one to understate, Dickens describes McChoakumchild's training thus: "He had been put through an immense variety of paces, and had answered volumes of head-breaking questions. Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody, biography, astronomy, geography, and general cosmography, the sciences of compound proportion, algebra, land-surveying and levelling, vocal music and drawing from models, were all at the end of his ten chilled fingers. He had worked his stony way into Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council's schedule B, and had taken the bloom off the higher branches of mathematics and physical science, French, German, Latin and Greek. He knew all about all the Water Sheds of all the world (whatever they are) and all the histories of all the peoples and all the names of all the rivers and mountains, and all the productions, manner and customs of all the countries, and all their boundaries and bearings of the two and thirty points of the compass. Ah, rather overdone, McChoakumchild. If only he had learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more!"

2. "Fields of knowledge" were those areas such as geography, or political, educational and legal theory, which drew upon other forms of knowledge but were not concerned to validate any one logically distinct form of knowledge such as science, arts, ethics or mathematics. Hirst included fields and what he called sub-forms (i.e. biology as a sub-form of science) in the domain of knowledge, and though he later admitted that non-discursive realms of meaning could be taught in schools, he maintained that they were not legitimately included as knowledge, but were peripheral to the main aim of schools. See Paul Hirst, Knowledge and the Curriculum (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), chs.4, 6, and Phillip Phenix, Realms of Meaning, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964). Hirst's argument has been developed in more depth by Brian Crittenden, Education and Social Ideas (Canada: Longman, 1973).

3. In W.A. in 1986, a bricklayer who leaves school at sixteen can early A$39,000 p.a., more than the top salary of a University Lecturer who has had up to twelve years of tertiary education. Welfare payments guarantee a comfortable enough life to those who drop out of the school system early and cannot find employment. In the state school system, 85% of children leave school as soon as they are allowed to by the State - in private schools where fee-paying parents have a stronger commitment to educational authority, there is a dropout rate of only 20%.

4. For example, "There is interest in a new form of accountability on the basis of the demonstrated achievement of students, not just on financial criteria, and quality judgements on the basis of student academic success, not just on the basis of selectivity" Southern Regional Education Board, Measuring Educational progress in the South: Student Achievement (Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 1984).

5. See Stephen Toulmin, Human Understanding (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972) especially p.359. Though both Stake and Campbell accept the significance of epistemology for the business of evaluation, the former is concerned to show that the laboratory experiment with "expert-determined" variables and measurements is less appropriate a method than non-intrusive participant observation. Tacit knowledge is epistemologically superior to quantitative evaluation. See R.E. Stake "The countenance of educational evaluation", Teachers College Record, 1967, 68 and Evaluating Educational programmes: the need and the response (Washington, D.C.: OECD, 1976). Campbell however sees such case studies as lacking in reliability, validity and above all replicability. He assumes that while forms of knowledge are by no means infallible, scientific experimentation is the most reliable method we have for drawing inferences of superior dependability about cause and effect in social settings. D.T. Campbell, "Reforms as experiments" American Psychologist 1969, 24, and "Evolutionary epistemology" in P.A. Schlipp

(Ed.) The philosophy of Karl Popper (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1974). Toulmin would claim that each method is socially acceptable, and simply exists at a different stage of evolution towards disciplinary status, much as common law and case law do.

6. It is often illuminating to read an outsider's perspective on our educational values. One of the most striking examples of culture confrontation is given by an articulate Australian aborigine's fictionalized account of his attempt to come to terms with the values of The University of Western Australia (Colin Johnson's Wild Cat Falling, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1965). He has more recently published an account of the "education" and subsequent obliteration of the Tasmanian aborigine society by early British settlers in Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World (Melbourne: Globe Press, 1983).

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Felicity Haynes, Senior Lecturer
Department of Education
University of Western Australia
Nedlands 6009

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